

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

January 28, 2000 LB 175

who is volatile and very angry at the landlord anyway. And, Mr. President, I'll wait until I'm called on to speak again.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Chambers. (Visitors introduced.) Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, Mattias is one of my best buddies. I'm glad that you announced him, that he's here and I was able to wave at him. Members of the Legislature, landlord-tenant law is one of the most exploitive areas of the law because who cares about tenants? I doubt that anybody appeared at a hearing on this bill to speak against it or in behalf of tenants. This is why the people with the least are oppressed the most. It's why people in poor areas of town pay a higher proportionate rate of property tax than those in the more affluent areas. What had happened in Douglas County, when there had to be an across-the-board rise in the assessed value of property, it was pointed out that you are assessing this property in these poor neighborhoods at more than what it's worth. Was there mercy shown? Was there an adjustment made? No. The fact is that this is the way we're going to administer the law, and you poor people should not be poor. But since you are, there is a price to pay for being poor in this society. And whereas soon to be Senator Maurstad is pulling down a salary of \$278,000 or whatever it is and lives way out there on the Gold Coast, and they're not even going to assess his property at the full value, you poor people, because you're poor, are going to pay taxes on something which lacks the value that is being taxed. You have a house worth \$25,000 and you're going to pay tax on \$30,000 or \$40,000, or whatever that across-the-board increase pushes it to. So you go down there because this is your government, this is the government that the U.S. Constitution gives you the right to petition for redress of grievance, and no grievance could be greater than to pay taxes where taxes are not owed. And the taxes under the law should not be owed on a greater value than that which you possess. So you go down there, having gone to civics lessons when you were in school, and you didn't pay a lot of attention, you barely got through the class, but something stuck in your mind that you have a right, when things are not going the way they should, to go to your government representatives and complain, and they'll make the wrong thing right. If you're put on a crooked path